

## Topic Task: Generating Ideas

### At a glance

**Level:** ISE I

**Focus:** Topic task

**Aims:** To practise communicative skills in speaking, to practise forming questions using the language of the grade and to generate ideas for the Topic task

**Objectives:** Students ask and answer questions using the language of the grade and students consider the topic they would like to develop in the Topic Phase

**Topic:** Students' own choice

**Language functions:** Expressing preferences, describing events in the indefinite and recent past, giving reasons, stating the duration of events and describing past actions over a period of time

**Grammar:** Present perfect tense, connecting clauses using *because*, adjectives and adverbials of quantity, expressions of preference and past continuous tense

**Lexis:** Vocabulary related to topics chosen

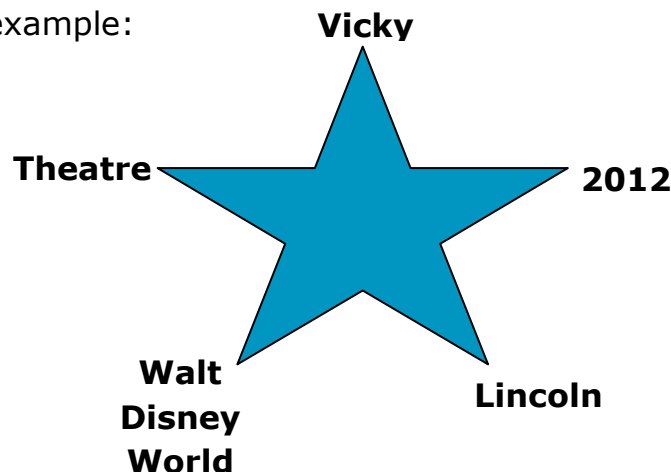
**Materials needed:** ISE I specifications, whiteboard, paper and pens

**Timing:** 90 minutes

### Procedure

#### Preparation

1. Draw a five point star on the board.
2. At each point, write something that is important to you (e.g. names, dates, places, etc.)
3. Here is an example:



**In class**

1. Remind students that the ISE I Speaking & Listening exam starts with a four minute Topic task. Explain that the Topic task is not a presentation, but rather a discussion about a topic that the candidate has previously chosen and prepared. Tell students that in this lesson they will practise talking about different topics and generate ideas for their own topic for the exam.
2. Tell students that the five points of the star represent things that are important to you. Ask students to ask you questions to find out **why** these things are important to you. The students should not just ask "Who is Vicky?" but "Is Vicky your best friend?".
3. Write question forms on the board and drill if necessary.
4. Tell students you want them to ask you more information about each point for example:  
"How long have you known Vicky?"  
Elicit some example questions and write them on the board.
5. Ask students to take out their ISE I specifications and look at the language requirements. Ask them to write more follow-up questions using the language of the grade in pairs. Some possible questions are:
  - a. *Have you been to Walt Disney World many times/recently?*
  - b. *Do you prefer going to the theatre to the cinema? Why?*
  - c. *How long did you live in Lincoln for?*
  - d. *Where were you living in 2012?*
6. Elicit and answer one or two follow-up questions for each point from different pairs. Write up the questions on the board.
7. Now tell students that it's their turn to identify some important things. Ask students to draw their own star and write five things that are important to them.
8. In pairs, students take turns to ask and answer questions about each other's stars, as they did with you. Tell students to spend two minutes on each point of the star.
9. After ten minutes, stop the students and tell them to write down the name of their partner and the point they found **the most interesting**.
10. Students repeat this activity with four different partners.

11. Circulate a piece of paper for each student (write their name at the top). Ask everyone who spoke to that student to write the point they found the most interesting on it.
12. Students take back the piece of paper with their name on, complete with a list of suggestions for interesting topics for the exam.
13. Whilst students are working in pairs, write up the errors you hear on the board. Once the students have completed the task, comment on their progress and then address the errors.

### **Extension activity**

Students who produce their stars more quickly should be encouraged to anticipate questions that they may be asked about each point on their star.

### **Further support activity**

The weaker students can be told to write example answers to the questions their partner asks them. You should then check their example answers.

### **After class**

Ask students to consider the topic they would like to develop in the Topic task and write down five important things about that topic. In the next lesson, put the students in pairs and ask them to talk about their topic and to explain the five important things.